

# FCL NEWSLETTER

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FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION

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## AVP: Teaching Non-Violence Behind the Walls and Beyond

**E**scalating costs of our overcrowded prison system demands a fresh look for more humane and cost-effective alternatives. California spends \$5.3 billion per year to incarcerate 162,000 prisoners. A significant portion of this cost is due to violent incidents among people who are incarcerated and prison staff. A violent incident may result in moving a prisoner into solitary confinement and cause a "lock-down," resulting in increased costs for medical care, disability pay, repair of property damage and additional labor hours.

But high financial costs cannot fully account for the human consequences of our broken penal system among the incarcerated, prison staff, their families, and California taxpayers. Released prisoners return to prison at a disturbing rate upon committing another crime or violating their parole. A recent report by the Little Hoover Commission called California's parole system a "billion dollar failure." The parole failure rate in California exceeds 70 percent, which is double the national average.

What is California doing to prepare incarcerated persons for re-entry into society, and why is it not more successful? What can the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) offer?

### Program History and Effectiveness

Faced with a budget and prison system crisis, we can look to AVP programs in California and elsewhere as models for reducing the incidence and impacts of violence while improving the lives of prisoners, staff and their families.

AVP began in 1975 at Green Haven Correctional Facility, a maximum-security prison in New York state, when a group of prisoners asked local Friends for training in nonviolence. They collaborated with the Quaker Project on Community



*Pat Hardy (back row, second from right) and prisoners inside Lompoc prison.*

Conflict to devise a prison workshop. In less than 30 years, these efforts developed into a program that has expanded to at least 35 states and a dozen countries. The program features an intensive three-day workshop that focuses on alternatives to violent behavior and social skills.

The "basic" workshop includes exercises that promote self-affirmation, respect for others, communication skills practice,

*(Continued on next page)*

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*"The Friends Committee on Legislation (FCL), guided by Quaker values, advocates for California state laws that are just, compassionate, and respectful of the inherent worth of every person."*

## **AVP: Reducing Violence in California's Prisons** *(Continued from page 1)*

cooperation and trust, and conflict resolution. The AVP process is based on the philosophy of "transforming power" — the power to transform violent or destructive situations into constructive or liberating experiences. Through development of communication skills and community building, participants change their own attitudes and behaviors while improving their environment.

A 2002 study prepared for the Delaware Department of Corrections demonstrates a "decrease in infractions by AVP participants over non-participants" and concludes that "AVP is a useful step in helping inmates who lack normal social skills to develop a foundation upon which they could more effectively operate in the outside world." The data shows that AVP is most effective in younger prisoners and those with at least a high school education, irrespective of race.

A 2001 study conducted by Christine Walrath of John Hopkins University at a medium-security corrections facility in Maryland found that AVP participants had significantly lower levels of expressed/experienced anger, lower rates of confrontations, and were more optimistic six months after the workshop. (Available online at <avpusa.org>.)

Dennis Bilden, a former administrator at Green Haven Correctional Facility and current Superintendent of Ulster Correctional Facility, commented on "the positive effects that the AVP program has on inmates and on the overall climate of the facility. Prisoners involved in the program were able not only to lead more conflict-free lives themselves, but were able to lead others in this direction. Morale of graduates was often high, which had a 'ripple effect' in the institution."

The Commissioner of Corrections in Delaware, Stan Taylor, comments, "Over the 12 years AVP has been active in Delaware prisons, almost 4,000 inmate participants have been involved. When I

was warden of one of our prisons, I saw AVP facilitate a dramatic reduction in the number of assaults between inmates in what had been a difficult maximum-security unit...[T]he overall climate improved to a point where inmates were actually seeking out ways to positively effect their living environment. I have seen similar results in each of the prisons that have implemented AVP." Taylor adds that one reason for the program's success is that prisoners are trained to co-facilitate the workshops along with outside community trainers. This increases greater credibility among the incarcerated population because inmate co-facilitators understand the prison culture better than outside trainers and allows for more training to be offered.

A program that grew out of AVP, titled Creative Conflict Resolution (CCR), is presently offered in California correctional facilities on a modified basis by Friends Outside. Friends Outside, founded 50 years ago to meet the emergency needs of family members of the incarcerated, is dedicated to breaking the cycle of crime and delinquency and facilitating community re-entry and family reunification. Research by Edward W. Hoppe, Ph.D., Chief Psychologist at Deuel Vocational Institute in California, on the CCR program states that "the CCR workshop was effective in creating a significant shift toward nonviolent attitudes" among persons convicted of a violent crime.

As a volunteer I repeatedly hear firsthand from inmate participants about how valuable it is to witness the care of "people on the outside." Many of the participants haven't seen a visitor for a long time. Their comments in program evaluations reflect a familiar theme: "Please continue to lead people ashore ... It's awfully cold and dark and wet out here!" "They were so gracious giving so much of themselves when they could be elsewhere. I'm very grateful for their time

and dedication."

### **What is happening in California?**

Fourteen local AVP groups are listed in California on the avpusa.org website, including chapters functioning or developing in the San Francisco Bay Area, Palo Alto, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Claremont and San Diego. Most of these outreach efforts have close connections with and support from Monthly Meetings of Friends in their areas, although the program is inclusive, and participants come from diverse backgrounds.

Los Angeles facilitators volunteer with prisoner facilitators in the California Youth Authority's Heman G. Stark facility in Chino. Teams in San Luis Obispo have trained over 150 men and continue facilitating workshops at the California Men's Colony. Santa Barbara facilitators have offered training workshops to Girl Scout members and leaders and have assisted at the California Men's Colony and Lompoc Federal Penitentiary. San Diego facilitators have been active at the R. J. Donovan Correctional Facility since the late 1980s and now work under the auspices of Friends Outside.

For several years, Quaker Center in Ben Lomond has been offering an annual series of AVP workshops. North Bay teams had been facilitating in California State Prison, San Quentin, for a number of years, but are now providing Spanish-speaking workshops in the community and with Friends Outside at local jails, yet remain eager to facilitate in prisons again. Other AVP chapters are preparing to enter prisons, including the Federal Correctional Institution in Dublin (Palo Alto chapter) and the California Institution for Women in Corona (Claremont chapter).

Services contracted by Friends Outside to the California Department of Corrections (CDC) include parenting education, visitor centers at prisons, and Creative Conflict Resolution workshops.



The San Francisco American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) office sponsors workshops for teens and children in the schools that are similar to AVP but are called Help Increase the Peace Program (see article below).

### What now?

The CDC often regards outside programs that help incarcerated persons to develop social skills as a burden on staff, even when these programs are offered at little or no cost. The bureaucratic barriers can be daunting to those who wish

to establish and sustain programs of this kind. Stronger legislative oversight combined with CDC understanding of and support for this work would make a big difference in AVP's ability to continue and expand the program to meet existing needs. As Dr. Hoppe wrote, "If we fail to facilitate a non-violent adjustment for violent inmates, the cost will continue to be staggering."

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

More AVP volunteers are needed. For more information, to enroll in a

workshop or to volunteer, please contact me at <avppat@earthlink.net> (805) 886-9773 (No collect calls, please) or Pat Hardy at FCL's address. ☺

*— Pat Hardy has facilitated AVP workshops in California prisons for 14 years. As co-founder of the Professional Association of Innkeepers International, she incorporated many of the training techniques from AVP as she led workshops for B&B owners throughout the U.S., Slovakia, Australia and Canada.*

# Transforming Violence is HIPP!

*"I don't have to throw punches to prove anything." — anonymous student*

Programs that prevent violence are even more beneficial than those that pick up the pieces after violence has occurred. The Help Increase the Peace Program (HIPP) began in 1991 through the American Friends Service Committee's Youth Empowerment Project and derives most of its fundamental concepts from the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP).

AVP was modeled on the Children's Creative Response to Conflict (CCRC) program. AVP's founders knew of a group that helped young people work through interpersonal conflicts with one another, and because they were aware that incarceration intensifies violent behavior, they adapted the CCRC program to help the incarcerated deal with the violence that had already disrupted their lives. While AVP does considerable work to support and rehabilitate people whose lives have already been harmed by violence, HIPP seeks to prevent young people from becoming involved in violent behavior and the criminal justice system.

From the HIPP website ([www.afsc.org/hipp.htm](http://www.afsc.org/hipp.htm)): "HIPP happens in schools, community centers, after school programs, church youth groups, juvenile detention centers, and substance abuse prevention programs. It has been done with young mothers, with youth who have dropped out or been expelled from school, and with feuding gang members. It has been used to bring youth together across racial and class lines."

There are few significant differences between the AVP and HIPP models,

although training sessions are modeled differently for different communities. For instance, AVP uses "transforming power" to describe the spiritual energy that enables one to turn away from violent choices. HIPP teaches "transforming power" by breaking it down into 12 principles (see sidebar) that make the concept more concrete for younger minds. The underlying purpose, values and lessons of both programs, however, are the same.

Both programs use graduates as workshop facilitators. The voluntary commitment of AVP facilitators creates a sense of trust in prisons, where paid workers are often mistrusted. Such a consideration is unnecessary in schools, where paying HIPP facilitators affirms the value of their work among student-aged facilitators and their peers.

Both programs bring about personal transformation, but HIPP also encourages collective action and the growth of ongoing groups that tackle issues of concern to youth: environmental racism, police harassment and bridging differences within communities. These ongoing activities help young people apply the concepts they have learned in the workshops to creative activism that can make their communities more just and equitable places by reducing violence. ☺

*— Stephen Myers, a former FCL Newsletter Editor, now works as Head Community Organizer for the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) in Sacramento.  
<quakerdude76@yahoo.com>*

## The Transforming Power of HIPP

1. Try to resolve conflicts by looking for what we have in common.
2. Reach for that something in others that tries to be positive.
3. Listen and try to understand where the other person is coming from before making up my mind.
4. Be truthful. Try to find the truth; no position based on lies can last.
5. Be ready to change my position if I discover it is not fair.
6. Being clear about what I want gives me the power to act in a courageous & positive way.
7. I will not always be able to ward off danger. If I cannot avoid risk, I'll try to risk being creative rather than violent.
8. Surprise & humor may help change the situation & the attitude & behavior of the people in the conflict.
9. Learn to trust my inner sense of when to act & when to withdraw.
10. Find ways to overcome injustices.
11. Be patient & persistent in solutions to injustice.
12. Help build community based on honest, respect and caring.

(Reprinted with permission)

# Whatever Happened To...

*This is a summary of significant bills that FCL is following in the current legislative session. Bill status is shown as of February 28, 2004. The full list of bills, text and history of each bill may be found by consulting the FCL website or by contacting the author's staff. To express your views on legislation, please write to the governor, your state senator, and your assembly member, with a copy to the bill's author at "State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814." You may find out who your legislators are by consulting the State Government pages of your local telephone directory.*

## Budget and Revenue

**AB 1815** (Wilma Chan, D., Oakland) restores the top personal income tax rates for incomes over \$130,000 (\$260,000 for joint returns). FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Rules Committee.

**ACA 14** (Darrell Steinberg, D., Sacramento) authorizes local governments to impose special taxes for infrastructure, including affordable housing, with the approval of 55 percent of voters. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Inactive File.

**ACA 16** (Loni Hancock, D., Berkeley) and **SB 17** (Martha Escutia, D., Norwalk) close loopholes that allow commercial property owners to structure change-of-ownership transactions to avoid property reassessment. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee and Assembly Inactive File, respectively.

**SCA 11** (Alarcón, D., Sun Valley) authorizes local governments to issue general obligation bonds and impose special taxes for infrastructure, including affordable housing, with the approval of a majority of voters. FCL SUPPORTS. Senate Constitutional Amendments Committee.

## Children and Youth

**AB 1792** (Leland Yee, D., San Francisco) expands the definition of "harmful matter to children" to include electronic video games that enables the player to virtually inflict serious injury upon human beings in a manner that is especially heinous, atrocious, or cruel. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Rules Committee.

**AB 1793** (Leland Yee, D., San Francisco) requires electronic video game retailers to display video games rated with mature or adults-only content in separate areas and at a height of not less than five feet. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Rules Committee.

**AB 1796** (Mark Leno, D., San Francisco) provides that persons convicted of a drug felony will be eligible to receive food stamps. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Rules Committee.

**SB 1287** (Sheila Kuehl, D., Santa Monica) requires courts to notify defendants who are custodial parents of potential consequences to their parental rights prior to the acceptance of a plea and requires the Department of Corrections to implement programs that encourage productive relationships between prisoners and their families. FCL SUPPORTS. Senate Public Safety Committee.

## Criminal Justice/ Imprisonment

**AB 384** (Tim Leslie, R., Tahoe City) directs the Department of Corrections and the Youth Authority to adopt regulations prohibiting tobacco for prisoners in correctional facilities. FCL OPPOSES. Senate Public Safety Committee.

**AB 854** (Paul Koretz, D., West Hollywood) as amended, adds preparation for successful reentry to the purposes of imprisonment in the Penal Code. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Floor.

**AB 1760** (Committee on Budget) reduces deductions from prisoners'

trust accounts from 50 percent to 30 percent of the balance for transfer to the Victims' Compensation Restitution Fund. FCL SUPPORTS. Held at Senate Desk.

**AB 1866** (Mark Leno, D., San Francisco) and **SB 1164** (Gloria Romero, D., Los Angeles) requires the Department of Corrections to permit representatives from the news media to interview or visit prisoners and to receive confidential correspondence from prisoners. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Public Safety and Senate Public Safety Committees, respectively.

**AB 1915** (Cindy Montañez, D. San Fernando) creates a statewide correctional education system and governing board within the Department of Corrections to provide every incarcerated person who has a reasonable expectation of release from custody with access to educational and vocational programs. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Rules Committee.

**AB 1946** (Darrell Steinberg, D., Sacramento) provides incarcerated persons diagnosed with a disease that will produce death within 12 months to have their sentences recalled provided they pose no threat to public safety. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Rules Committee.

**AB 2895** (Jackie Goldberg, D., Los Angeles) requires the Department of Corrections to provide female prisoners with children under age 6 with written notification of eligibility for release into community correctional

facilities. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Rules Committee.

**AB 2946** (Jackie Goldberg, D., Los Angeles) requires county correctional facilities to develop rules to ensure that clergy are denied access to an incarcerated person only when a prisoner objects or when the presence of clergy would present a clear and present danger to the safety and security of the institution thru a rule violation. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Rules Committee.

**SB 4X 3** (Charles Poochigian, R., Fresno) prevents prisoners incarcerated at state and local correctional facilities from receiving workers' compensation benefits. FCL OPPOSES, unless amended to allow prisoners to receive benefits for injuries that extend beyond the duration of a prison sentence or jail term. Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee.

**SB 1399 and SCA 8** (John Vasconcellos, D., Santa Clara) requires the Director of Corrections to evaluate

each person incarcerated in the state prison on or after January 1, 2005, except for prisoners sentenced to life without parole, within 90 days of entry, with respect to his or her educational, vocational, and psychosocial development and requires programs that address each prisoner's deficiencies. FCL SUPPORTS. Senate Rules and Senate Appropriations Committees, respectively.

### Equality/Nondiscrimination

**AB 1383** (Herb Wesson, D., Culver City) requires the Commission on Police Officer Standards and Training to provide law enforcement agencies with training materials regarding racial and cultural trends and requires law enforcement personnel to complete a refresher course every three years instead of every five years. FCL SUPPORTS. Senate Inactive File.

### Health Care

**AB 30** (Keith Richman, R., Northridge) as amended, requires that

employed childless adults be included in Healthy Families Program expansion. FCL SUPPORTS. Senate Appropriations Committee.

**SB 921** (Sheila Kuehl, D., Santa Monica) establishes the California Health Care System, a single-payer, universal health care system that would negotiate and pay fees to health care providers. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly Health Committee.

### Housing

**AB 1426** (Darrell Steinberg, D., Sacramento) establishes a pilot program in the Sacramento region to encourage local governments to enter into a joint powers agreement to increase the supply of low-income housing. FCL SUPPORTS. Senate Inactive File.

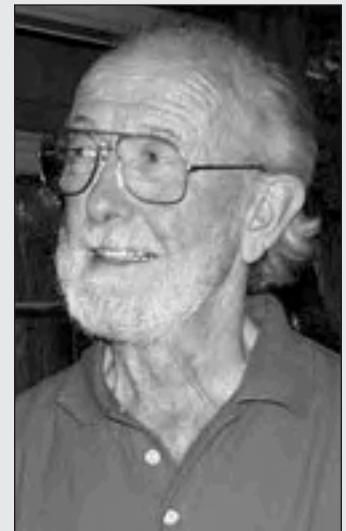
**SB 744** (Joseph Dunn, D., Santa Ana) allows developers of affordable housing to appeal denials of construction permits to the Department of Housing and Community Development. FCL SUPPORTS. Assembly, held at Desk. ☹

## Roland Schinzinger

### November 22, 1926 – January 25, 2004

On January 25 this year, Roland Schinzinger, a long-time Friend and FCL supporter, died unexpectedly at home. Roland had been on FCL's Executive Committee for seven years, and more recently was a Board member on the FCL Education Fund. He was a passionate advocate for environmental and social causes, the peace movement, engineering ethics, and city of Irvine bike trails. Roland had been on the faculty at University of California, Irvine, since its beginnings and was professor emeritus of Electrical Engineering at the time of his death. With FCL, Roland focused on the death penalty and prison issues and helped out with FCL dinners and events in southern California. He was a voracious reader of newspapers, and over the years he clipped and sent FCL many articles on pertinent topics for our lobbyists.

We will all miss Roland's humor, grace, quiet strength and thoughtful contributions, and hold his wife Shirley Price and their family in the Light. ☹





# FCL Annual Sacramento Dinner

**Keynote Speaker:**

***Senator John Burton***

**May 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-9:30 p.m.**

**Clarion Hotel**

**Invitations coming soon – contact us  
if you don't receive one by 4/1 or need  
other information or assistance.**

**(916) 443-3734 or [outreach@fclca.org](mailto:outreach@fclca.org)**

The Friends Committee on Legislation of California (FCL) includes Friends and like-minded persons, a majority of whom are appointed by Monthly Meetings of the Religious Society of Friends in California.



Expressions of views in this newsletter are guided by Statements of Policy prepared and approved by the FCL Committees. Seeking to follow the leadings of the Spirit, the FCL speaks for itself and for like-minded Friends. No organization can speak officially for the Religious Society of Friends.



While we strive above all for correctness and probity, we are quick to recognize that to err is human. We therefore solicit and welcome comments and corrections from our readers.

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